

Scowcroft, and John Warner. At least seven generals and admirals who commanded our nuclear forces feel the same way.

This does not restrict the United States when it comes to missile defense. It is very clear it does not. It is one of the things that has been said, but the people who say it ignore the obvious. It was several weeks ago when we had a NATO meeting on missile defense moving forward to make our Nation safer, and the Russians were engaged in that dialog. It was a historic breakthrough. They ignored that when they raised that issue.

As Secretary of Defense Bob Gates has said, the new treaty will impose "no limits on us" when it comes to missile defense.

There is a concern, as well, expressed that the treaty does nothing to address the issue of tactical nuclear weapons, where the Russians apparently outnumber us. I agree it is a serious issue that needs to be addressed, especially from a nonproliferation viewpoint, since many of these weapons are deployed in undisclosed locations. However, this treaty, like the Moscow Treaty and the original START agreement, deliberately and rightly focuses on strategic nuclear weapons.

Bipartisanship on issues of national security has been the hallmark of our Nation. Even in the toughest of times and in the most desperate political circumstances we have come together.

For example, in 1992, just after the Cold War came to an end, the Senate ratified the first strategic arms reduction treaty by an overwhelming vote of 93 to 6. Of my Republican Senators who are still here today who were in attendance for the vote—Senators BOND, COCHRAN, GRASSLEY, HATCH, LUGAR, MCCAIN, MCCONNELL, and SHELBY—all voted in support.

In 1996, the Senate voted 87 to 4 in support of START II, including the votes of Republican Senators BENNETT, BOND, COCHRAN, GRASSLEY, GREGG, HATCH, HUTCHISON, LUGAR, MCCAIN, MCCONNELL, and SNOWE.

In 2002, the Senate voted 95 to 0—that is right, 95 to 0—in support of the Moscow Treaty, and 26 of the 27 Republicans there at the time are still here today and they voted in support of that treaty.

At the peak of the Cold War, the stockpile of nuclear weapons held by all nuclear weapons states was some 70,000 warheads, 1.6 million times the power of the bomb at Hiroshima. We have reduced the number of those weapons by more than two-thirds. Yet today the combined nuclear weapon capability is still equal to 150,000 of the nuclear bombs used in World War II.

Today we have an opportunity to further reduce this threat in a responsible bipartisan way. I do not know when this session will end tonight, but I will say to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle: You have ample opportunity to debate. You have ample opportunity to offer amendments.

Time is not a good excuse. We have been in session now, this day and yesterday—we started at about 3:30. Only one amendment has been filed on the Republican side. If they truly want to engage us in an important debate about this treaty issue, do it now. Don't put it off. We have to reach the point where we can verify what is being done in Russia to make this a safer nation and to move us toward a more peaceful world.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed en bloc to Executive Calendar Nos. 885, 886, 917, and 935; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that any statements relating to the nominations be printed in the RECORD, and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

THE JUDICIARY

Catherine C. Eagles, of North Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of North Carolina, vice Norwood Carlton Tilley, Jr., retired.

Kimberly J. Mueller, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of California, vice Frank C. Damrell, Jr., retired.

John A. Gibney, Jr., of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Virginia, vice Robert E. Payne, retired.

James Kelleher Bredar, of Maryland, to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland, vice J. Frederick Motz, retiring.

TREATY WITH RUSSIA ON MEASURES FOR FURTHER REDUCTION AND LIMITATION OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

THE OMNIBUS

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Madam President, I want to speak for a few minutes about the START treaty. Before I do, there is another issue that has been debated on this floor that we are going to continue debating over the next several days, and that is the issue of the funding of the Federal Government. There is an omnibus bill that has been laid out there now, which is something that happens from time to time that is simply not the way business ought to be done in this body.

As we move into the debate on the omnibus bill, there are a lot of us who want to see, obviously, the government remaining open and running at full speed. All of us within this body want to make sure as we do that, we do it the right way.

Frankly, to run in an omnibus bill at the last minute out here that has thousands of earmarks—some of which

folks like me requested months and months ago, and until 2 or 3 days ago had no idea those requests would be honored and are now included in there, amounting to billions of dollars. With the issues we have now, including the election that took place on November 2 where the American people spoke loudly and clearly about the way Washington spends money, this is not the way to do business.

I intend to vote against the omnibus bill. I will speak more about that at a later date.

THE NEW START TREATY

I want to speak for a minute on the START treaty, and I want to start off by commending both Senator KERRY and Senator LUGAR who, as the chairman and ranking member on the Foreign Relations Committee, have worked long and hard on this particular measure.

This treaty was signed by the President after negotiations were completed back in the spring. By the time we got the text, and then the additions to the text, I would say it was probably into April or May, whenever it was.

Since that time, I know both Senator KERRY and Senator LUGAR have worked very hard. They have been open for discussion. I have had several discussions with Senator LUGAR about it and have explained my problems with it early on to him. He has been very receptive. I received another letter from him today further explaining some of the issues that are out there.

But that is an indication of how complex this issue is. As a member of the Armed Services Committee and the Intelligence Committee, I have had the opportunity to have any number of briefings. I have been in hearing after hearing. I have been in meeting after meeting with members of the administration as well as outside experts who believe this is right, and those who believe it is wrong. I have been involved in phone calls. I have traveled abroad to visit with our friends in both France and Great Britain to learn about what they are doing with respect to their nuclear inventory.

It is not like folks like me who have to make a decision whether to support this have not been working on it and trying to understand the complexities of this treaty. Gosh, those Members of the Senate who do not serve on Foreign Relations, Armed Services, or Intelligence do not have the benefit of the extensive briefings those who serve on those committees have had, and they have been trying to understand the operatives that are involved in this treaty also.

My concerns were laid out to Senator LUGAR early on in a letter. I have been very clear in conversations and hearings, including in an extensive conversation that I had with my longtime good friend, Senator Sam Nunn, who, along with Senator LUGAR, in my mind are the two godfathers of the Russia-United States nuclear issue.